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News

ISSN 0160-9211

January-March 1982, Vol. 13, No. 1

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National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Library of Congress

MAR 15 1982

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DEPOSITORY 376

Easy cassette machine is on the way

An easy-to-operate cassette playback machine is being developed with the fewest possible number of controls. The machine is planned for patrons who don't need all the options on the standard machine and want more automatic operation. It will be an alternative to the standard machine, not a replacement.

"This is a no-frills machine designed to play a standard cassette straight though," explains Henry Paris, chief of the NLS Materials Development Division. "You simply insert the cassette, start the machine and select the volume in one easy operation, and read—for up to six hours. There's no need to touch the machine again until you're ready for the next cassette."

Simple controls

The first model built was a nonoperating wooden mock-up of the machine to study placement and handling of controls. "We're emphasizing functions with this machine," says Mr. Paris. "What we're concerned with is engineering for human needs."

An operating prototype model has now been produced and tested with a small number of readers selected by the Washington, D.C., library. It has only two main controls, both easily located at the front of the machine and operated differently—one is a sliding switch and the other is a push button. Moving the sliding switch from the stop position to the right will start the tape and select the volume. Depressing the button rewinds the tape and permits review of information.

The cassette is ejected by sliding open a door and depressing the tape deck, and does not require a control switch for removal.

Controls on the standard model either not needed or not available on this machine are the side-selector switch, tone control, eject key, and all the speed controls—speed selection, variable speed, and fast forward. Three of the separate controls on the standard model (stop, play, and volume) are combined into one.

Automatic features

Some controls are not needed because of automatic features. The tape rewinds automatically when a cassette is inserted into the tape deck, and an audible beep signals when the tape is ready to play. At the end of each side, the motor reverses and a head is activated to play in the new direction; there is no need to turn the cassette over.

The automation is accomplished with microprocessors, miniature computers programmed to take care of routine functions that formerly would have used complicated wired circuit-boards requiring much more space. Says Mr. Paris, "We now input on a

NLS patron Genevieve Bastide tries the controls of the easy-machine's preliminary model for ease of operation.

LC 19 13.

computer terminal what used to be done with a soldering iron."

The microprocessors can be programmed to sense when there is a pause in the reading, rather than a longer silence that indicates the end of the tape. They can also "listen" to the reverse of a tape and know when it is empty and need not be played.

Readers can select manual operation if they wish; a switch on the right side of the machine deactivates the side-changing mechanism. In the manual mode, the machine will stop at the end of each side until instructed to resume play.

Portability

The easy machine must be used where there is an electrical outlet. It is smaller and lighter than the standard model and is more easily moved from one power source to another, as from an outlet in the living room to an outlet in the kitchen.

It is not portable in the sense that the standard battery-powered machine is able to operate for five or six hours away from a power source.

Future development

According to Mr. Paris, current design of the easy machine represents "an estimate of what might be most useful to patrons." When the prototype has been tested by NLS for construction and engineering, several machines will be produced for more extensive consumer evaluation.

"We might end up with something quite different," Mr. Paris says. "We're trying to respond to needs of consumers, and they may find things that we didn't consider."

Evaluation, production, and distribution of the easy machines will take approximately a year if the consumer evaluation is positive or requires only minor modifications.

For your information

The photoembossing machine developed in Japan and described in *News* (November–December 1981, Vol. 12, No. 6) can now be purchased through a distributor in this country, Japan Publications Trading Co., Ltd.

For information about price and delivery contact: Mr. Yoshiro Fujiwara, 45 Hawthorne Place, Briarcliff Manor, NY 10510; phone (914) 762-3242.

News is published quarterly by
National Library Service for the Blind
and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, DC 20542
All correspondence should be addressed to the attention of Publication and Media Section

Union catalog

Network-produced titles increase in FY 81

Approximately 2,000 records were received from network libraries for inclusion in the NLS microfiche catalog during the 1981 fiscal year that ended on September 30, nearly equaling the number of NLS titles for the same period. Network titles increased 500 over those reported in the previous year.

Titles from twenty-three libraries are included in the cooperative cataloging program, which provides network libraries access to materials produced by other libraries as well as by NLS. The most active participant is the regional library in Lansing, Michigan.

The union catalog, which is updated quarterly, was first issued in December 1976 with 10,000 titles in the NLS collections. It now contains 34,000 NLS titles. Addition of network-produced titles began in January 1979.

International briefs

Australia. The Library Association of Australia, New South Wales Branch, organized a seminar entitled "The Disabled in Libraries: A Workshop on Attitudes and Barriers," held at the University of Sydney August 11. Part of a continuing education program to mark the International Year of Disabled Persons, the seminar's objective was to increase the awareness of the position of disabled persons as users and employees in libraries. Topics included attitudes by and about disabled persons, successful library use, and employment.

Copyright, new technology, resource sharing, and the need for standards were themes of the Second National Seminar on Library Services for the Handicapped held at Australian National University, Canberra, May 18–20. On May 27–28, the Library Council of New South Wales held a seminar on library services for the disabled.

NLS has completed arrangements with the Royal Blind Society of New South Wales (RBS) to make available French and Spanish talking-book titles on interlibrary loan. RBS has also established in Sydney a pilot "Per-

sonal Reader Service" for persons needing material read directly to them. Correspondence, business papers, household information, and hobby material are typical of the items handled by this service.

Tanzania. Representatives of twelve African countries met in Arusha in November 1980 to discuss library service to visually handicapped readers in African developing countries. The seminar was sponsored by UNESCO after International Federation of Library Associations Round Table of Libraries for the Blind talks in Strebske Pleso, Czechoslovakia, between NLS Director Frank Kurt Cylke, Donald Roskilly, former director of the Talking Book Division, Royal National Institute for the Blind, and D.S. Zharkov, director of the USSR's Republican Central Library for the Blind.

Resolutions and recommendations made at the seminar include the following:

- African governments should review or introduce legislation to expand library service to the visually handicapped.
- Emphasis should be placed on educational institutions as library service target groups, and on braille as the preferred medium.
- African countries should establish facilities to produce braille, talking books, and other materials in native and foreign languages.
- National and international inter library loans should be encouraged.
- Special library services should be incorporated into existing library systems.

The countries represented at the seminar were Cameroun, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Mauritius, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

South Africa. The South Africa Library for the Blind circulated 54,320 recorded cassettes to 1,210 readers between April 1, 1980, and March 31, 1981. Also during that period, the library circulated 12,740 braille and 630 Moon volumes, as well as 1,710 braille and 50 Moon magazines to 540 braille and 40 Moon readers. Total collection stock includes 3,600 recorded titles on 25,080 cassettes, 8,120 braille titles in 29,750 volumes, and 960 Moon titles in 3,640 volumes.

England. The Ulverscroft Foundation has established a Frederick A. Thorpe Traveling Fellowship of up to £2,000, to be awarded in alternate years beginning in 1982. More than one fellowship may be awarded in any year. The aim of the fellowship is to give librarians, teachers, lecturers, and others in related fields the opportunity to develop their knowledge and commitment. This could be done by undertaking an approved piece of work, study, demonstration, innovation, research, or experiment in the supply of reading material, information access, and special media to handicapped and needy persons. Application forms (to be submitted by March 31, 1982) and information can be obtained from Ulverscroft Foundation, The Green, Bradgate Road, Anstey, Leicestershire, LE7 7FU, England.

Malaysia. The National Library of Malaysia was formally established in 1971. Its present large-print book collection is 40 percent Malay, 60 percent English. Its goal is to reverse these figures. The new building of the National Library, planned for 1983, will include a special audiovisual section providing library services for visually handicapped persons.

UNESCO arranged a consultant mission in the spring of 1980 that noted the following:

- Cassettes (2-track) are used throughout the country.
- All thirteen states of Malaysia have public libraries that could serve in a network for the distribution of library materials to visually handicapped patrons.
- Library services should include braille and large-print books, talking books, audiovisual aids, and librarians specially assigned to direct these services.

Bolivia. The Bolivia Braille Library of the Bolivian Institute for Blindness (IBC) in La Paz has a braille book collection numbering 1,000 volumes. These include books on national and general history, languages, mathematics, natural sciences, chemistry, physics, literature, religion, and music. Magazines, dictionaries, and textbooks are also included.

The library, directed by Adrian Charca Condori, occupies one floor of the Louis Braille School of Rehabilitation for the Blind, also a part of the IBC. Users include blind students, administrative personnel, teachers, and other interested persons. The library plans to expand service to include blind persons nationwide.

National exhibit program 1982

Date	Organization and place	Audience
Feb. 1–6	**Music Library Association and Workshop** Los Angeles, California	Professionals and institutions concerned with music libraries.
Feb. 10–13	**Music Educators' National Conference** San Antonio, Texas	Music educators of students who may require special services.
March 31–April 4	**National Council on Aging** Washington, D.C.	Members work with and through other organizations to develop concern for older people.
April	**National Homecaring Council** Washington, D.C.	Health and welfare workers who provide home health care services.
April 13–15	**Council for Exceptional Children** Houston, Texas	Teachers and administrators of other-than-average children: gifted; retarded; visually, auditorily, or physically handicapped.
April 26–May 1	**International Reading Association** Chicago, Illinois	Teachers or supervisors of reading using print and nonprint materials.
April 28–30	**President's Committee for the Employment of the Handicapped** Washington, D.C.	Meeting of professionals who work with handicapped persons nationwide as well as with users and potential users.
May 10–14	**American Occupational Therapy Association** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Practicing, teaching, and student occupational therapists who have direct contact with potential program users.
June 26–July 2	**American Nurses Association** Washington, D.C.	Organization of nurses.
July 3–10	**American Council of the Blind** Atlanta, Georgia	Major group, primarily of program users, that provides referral services, tape library, and consultative services.
July 4–9	**National Federation of the Blind** Minneapolis, Minnesota	The largest single membership group for blind people.
July 10–15	**American Library Association** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	Organization of librarians that promotes libraries and librarianship and delivery of user-oriented library information services.
July 23–25	**National Council of Senior Citizens** Detroit, Michigan	Organization of 3,800 autonomous clubs pursuing education and action programs for senior citizens.
July 25–29	**American Association of Workers for the Blind** Orlando, Florida	Group promotes all phases of work for blind and visually impaired people.
August 10–15	***Blinded Veterans Association*** New Orleans, Louisiana	Organization that helps blind veterans reestablish themselves as active, productive citizens.

(program continued on p. 5)

News

ugust 22–28 | **International Federation of Library Associations**
Montreal, Canada | Independent non-governmental association promotes international cooperation in all fields of library activity.

International cooperation

Visit to Japan is mutually beneficial

At the invitation of the Japanese Library Association (JLA), Henry Paris, chief of the NLS Materials Development Division, was a major speaker at the association's annual convention in October. The purpose of the JLA-sponsored trip was to stimulate interest in national library service for blind and physically handicapped individuals, in conjunction with the International Year of Disabled Persons. Library services in Japan are not currently centralized (see related article below.)

Arrangements were also made to address three other interested groups, to visit organizations providing services to blind and physically handicapped people, and to meet with manufacturers of recording and playback equipment.

Explorations with the manufacturing firms may have a strong impact on international dissemination of 4-track 15/16 ips cassette technology for blind and physically handicapped readers. Initial discussion with two major firms, Sony and Panasonic, centered around small, portable cassette players and possible modifications from commercial 2-track cassettes recorded at 1⅞ ips to 4-track cassettes recorded at 15/16 ips.

Japan

Many sources provide library services

Eighty-three braille libraries throughout Japan provide braille and talking-book services. Facilities and services vary greatly between organizations. Some concentrate on braille books, while others provide talking books, personal reader services, reference services, aids, braille classes, and training for daily living. Nineteen main braille publishing centers provide most of the books for the braille libraries, but some libraries have small publishing departments for special items.

The Japan Braille Library in Tokyo has the largest collection, with 104,000 braille volumes and 182,000 tapes. Its staff numbers 79 members, 418 braille volunteers, and 256 recording volunteers. In 1981 the library lent in excess of 64,000 braille volumes and 424,000 tapes to its 12,750 registered readers.

Nichi-mo-ren (Japan Federation of Blind Persons) has 4,500 braille books and 5,000 recorded tapes. Its activities include the production and lending of braille books and cassette tapes, braille transcription, and guidance to volunteers.

The Japan Lighthouse Blind Persons Information and Culture Center operates a library and braille publications department, and produces 8,000 volumes of books for children, textbooks, and magazines. Nichi-mo Shakyo (Japan Blind Persons Social Welfare Facilities Discussion Group) operates a braille library, publishes in braille, and produces a catalog of braille books available throughout Japan. Nichi-mo-i (Japan Blind Persons Welfare Committee) recommends, translates, and edits books for the visually handicapped. Railway Kosai Association publishes a monthly taped magazine, *Kakufue*, for the Japan Braille Library (Nitten). The Japanese Red Cross loans braille books and provides volunteer braille transcription services. Lions Clubs also provide braille and recorded books.

There has been tremendous growth in medical material available, as well as a shift in reader preference toward talking books. Volunteer narrators are an integral part of the increasing emphasis on recorded books, and require less initial training than braille transcribers, who train for a period of sixteen months to three years. Users are 25 percent students, 30 percent medical, 17 percent unemployed, 12 percent others in the work force, 3 percent housewives, 3 percent teachers, and 10 percent others. Of all users, 64 percent are men, 35 percent are women, and 1 percent are groups.

Braille libraries are usually governed by an elected board of directors. Organizations are

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Biblos, *vol. 32, no.*
August 1981.

entitled to national government funding if registered under the Social Welfare Law of 1953. The balance of funds comes from local and prefectural governments and fund-raising activities. The braille library at Ueda is the only government-operated one in Japan.

Words speak for themselves in reading aid

This article first appeared in New Scientist, *London, the weekly review of science and technology. Reprinted with permission.*

Dutch researchers have developed a talking book which they believe could be an important teaching aid for dyslexic children. With the aid of speech synthesis circuitry, the book—the result of a joint effort between Eindhoven's Technical University and Philips's language laboratory—will provide pupils who suffer from "word blindness" with visual and audible versions of a chosen word. A later version could help to expand the vocabulary of foreign language students.

Below each word in the book is a line of black and white marks that make up a binary code. The code represents the combinations of amplitude, pitch, and bandwidth associated with each sound, or "phoneme," in a word. Code-words on average comprise 800 bits of information in an area measuring 17 mm × 8 mm on the printed page. To hear the sound of a word, the student places a scanner fitted with diode lamps on top of the code and presses a button.

In the current version of the equipment built in Eindhoven, a microcomputer analyses the binary sequence that the scanner reads and converts it into speech signals that emerge from a speaker. The technique is called linear predictive coding, similar to the principle of the bar-code readers that help supermarkets to control their stock from sales checkouts: "but these codes are an order of magnitude smaller than bar codes," says Don Bouwhuis, head of the project at Philips.

Although the talking book alone would not be an answer to the problem of overcoming dyslexia, it could help to reduce the amount of supervision that a child would need to overcome the handicap. And it has the advantage over teaching aids based on tape recorded information that it will respond immediately, and quickly, to an operator's instructions.

Bouwhuis and his team, together with researchers from Tilburg University, are studying ways in which the book could be adapted to teach people English. But, from the beginning of next year, it will be the subject of projects to investigate its use in speech therapy and foreign language teaching. Should the idea become a commercial proposition, the hardware that supported the book would not be very expensive, says Bouwhuis: the scanner he chose is commercially available and a speech synthesis chip that Philips is developing will replace the microcomputer. Because each code-word has its own "memory," there would be no need for more than a very simple electronic memory—about half a second—in the speech synthesis chip.

Network exchange

Pennsylvania. The Philadelphia regional library rewarded children who completed the summer reading program this year in a way that continued their literary experiences, with tickets to a stage performance of Dickens's *Christmas Carol* on December 27. Nineteen children in grades 4–8 received invitations for reading four books and calling in to discuss them with the children's librarian. They also received a certificate of accomplishment.

Idaho. The regional library has produced two issues of a new patron newsletter on cassette and in large print. The editor, Carol Reeder, was at NLS for orientation in November. Idaho serves 2,300 readers and circulated 83,000 books, magazines, and other materials last year.

Virginia. A subregional serving five independent cities opened in December in Staunton, bringing the total of subregionals in Virginia to eight. Subregional librarian Janet Foster reports that they opened with enthusiasm but without shelving.

Kentucky. The subregional library at Covington celebrated its first anniversary with an open house on November 7, 1981.

Ohio. The Cincinnati regional library moved into a new addition to the main library the first part of November. They were the first department to move in and are now located in the downtown area and are on all bus routes. The new area is air conditioned and provides more space for book storage.

Eunice Lovejoy has resigned from the State Library of Ohio. Barney McEwen, Indiana

regional librarian and chairperson-elect of the Midlands region, has assumed the chair.

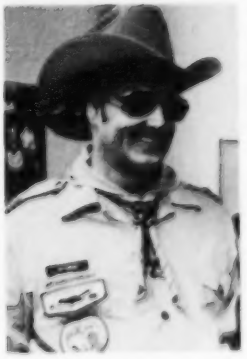
Mississippi. JoEllen Ostendorf, Mississippi regional librarian, was presented with the Mississippi Library Association's Past Presidents' Award at the association's annual convention in October. The award is given to the outstanding young librarian in the state; the recipient is selected by former library association presidents.

The award was first presented in 1973 and is given to recognize exceptional achievement by a beginning librarian. Ms. Ostendorf is only the eighth person to receive the award. The presentation is made only when past MLA presidents feel there is a qualified candidate.

Ms. Ostendorf has worked for the Mississippi Library Commission for the past five years and has been head of Service for the Handicapped for the past four years. During that time, Friends of the Handicapped was formed. This group has raised money to purchase recording equipment and a recording booth. Among her other credits, Ms. Ostendorf conducted eighteen statewide workshops for librarians in 1979 and compiled a manual on the NLS program for use in libraries and other institutions throughout Mississippi.

Delaware. The regional library moved the first part of December to new quarters shared with the state library. The new location is easy for people to drive to, since it is on a major highway close to the center of Dover and there is ample parking. Librarian Marietta Kertiles says that the new space is brightly lit and much more functional than the old location.

She also reports that she used the Multistate Center for the North as a backup for materials during the move and the multistate staff ". . . gave wonderful service; we needed things quickly and they provided them." The move was accomplished with almost no disruption of service.



. Cafer Barkus, Perchool for the Blind, ses braille materials couting volunteers.
***ht.** John Sevier, Na- Advisory Committee outing for the Handid, and James n, leader of handid scouts.*

Scouting for the Visually Impaired

Volunteers, professionals confer at NLS

The first National Conference on Scouting for the Visually Impaired was held in Washington, D.C., on November 2–4, 1981. The purpose of the meeting was "to bring together scouting volunteers, professionals, and other interested persons for the purpose of generating information and ideas on how to increase scouting opportunities for youngsters who are visually impaired."

Participants spent Nov. 3, the first full day of the conference, at NLS. They learned about the NLS program including book selection for children and young adults, toured facilities most related to the scouting program, and exchanged field experiences about working with visually handicapped Boy Scouts. The principal speaker at the banquet that evening was Miriam Pace, assistant chief of the NLS Network Division. The banquet was emceed by Bill West, NLS audio-book specialist and a long-time worker with visually handicapped Boy Scouts.

The conference was sponsored by the Boy Scouts of America, the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and NLS.

News

Deposit collections

Numbers almost double in eight-year period

The number of deposit collections maintained by network libraries grew from 11,839 in 1973—the earliest year for which figures are available—to 22,543 in 1980, an increase of 90.4 percent in eight years.

Deposit collections consist of recorded books and playback machines provided to institutions for circulation to eligible patrons or residents. They provide immediate access to reading material and often serve as an introduction to the NLS program. The size and content of the collection depends on the population served and the potential use. Books are rotated frequently to provide a constant supply and a variety of choices.

Institutions served are primarily nursing and convalescent homes, schools, hospitals, and public libraries. Other groups served to a lesser extent include retirement homes, day-care centers, rehabilitation centers, senior-citizen community centers, social agencies, prisons, and colleges.

The 1980 figures show that nursing and convalescent homes have the largest number of deposit collections—almost 9,000—making up 39.3 percent of all deposits. Schools, including private schools and schools for blind individuals, make up the second largest category with almost 28 percent of the total. Individuals in these institutions may also be patrons of the NLS service and receive their own books by mail, using the deposit collection to supplement what they request. Others eligible may rely solely on the deposit collection if they wish.

More than 2,000 hospitals have deposit collections, which provide service for the temporarily disabled. These collections may also introduce the service to people whose condition is diagnosed as permanent.

Deposit collections in public libraries also number about 2,000 across the country and serve as a local source of material for eligible patrons. A well-managed deposit collection may be the basis for the establishment of a subregional library.

More than 3,000 deposit collections are in other institutions with an eligible population needing service. These collections are established where network librarians see an opportunity to reach new readers and where they can obtain cooperation from the institution involved. This category increased 188 percent during the eight-year period, indicating an extensive outreach effort into new and different communities such as senior-citizen centers and prisons.

Notice

With this issue, *News* begins quarterly rather than bimonthly publication. Issue dates will be January-March, April-June, July-September, and October-December.

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The Library of Congress
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13/2

News

ISSN 0160-9211

April–June 1982 Vol. 13, No. 2

NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

JUN 9 1982

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DEPOSITORY 376

National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

The Library of Congress

1982 national conference: "Today's Challenges"

The theme of the NLS biennial conference to be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, July 6–9 is "Today's Challenges." Approximately 200 network librarians serving blind and physically handicapped individuals will meet at the Holiday Inn–Independence Mall to discuss current activities, achievements, and topics of concern.

Conference activities

The conference convenes on July 6 with an all-day session primarily for new network librarians, but not limited to that group. July 7 will be a full-day session for all participants. Morning work sessions will be held on July 8 and 9, with optional tours planned for the afternoons to the Philadelphia regional library, Multistate Center for the North, and Volunteer Services for the Blind.

Panel discussions and seminars will focus on areas network librarians have asked to have addressed: funding sources, grant writing, space utilization, shelving techniques, volunteer programs, consumer relations, audio-book production, and automation, among others.

Philadelphia—past and present

Because Philadelphia is celebrating its tricentennial this year, conference participants will have a lot to see and do each day after the scheduled meetings. The conference site is in the historic area—near Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, the Betsy Ross House, and the U.S. Mint.

In addition, Philadelphia is sponsoring several activities in connection with its tricentennial. "The Welcome Sound of American Music" will be presented through July 11, featuring concerts, troubadors at sidewalk cafes, and string-band parades. Rittenhouse Square will be the site of a display of thirty-five large-scale contemporary sculptures. The Free Library of Philadelphia will have an exhibit, drawn from the library's rare book collection, including a first edition of Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* and a 1300 A.D. copy of the Magna Carta.

The Philadelphia regional library will hold "A Philadelphia Welcome" for network librarians on July 8 with a wine and cheese party and surprise entertainment.

Coordinated events

A three-day orientation has been scheduled at NLS during the week prior to the conference for librarians who would like to take full advantage of their time in the area. Orientation dates are June 30–July 2.

A seminar on planning barrier-free libraries will be held on the afternoon of July 9, under the sponsorship of NLS and the School of Library and Information Science, The Catholic University of America. See the application form on p. 8.

The annual American Library Association convention will be held in Philadelphia immediately following the NLS conference, from July 10–15.

C-80 cassette machine

Pitch restoration device is added feature

A pitch restoration component has been built in to the latest cassette playback machine, the C-80 model. This device allows the reader to use the variable-speed control to achieve faster or slower speeds than the rate of the original narration without changing the pitch of the narrator's voice. All major elements of the C-80 model are identical with the previous model— the C-79—in quality and in operation.

Using the pitch-restoration feature of the C-80 model results in considerable distortion in sound quality. The device sacrifices sound quality to achieve the benefit of more rapid information transfer. With the pitch-restoration switch off, the machine is the same as the C-79. Pitch restoration adds a feature to the machine

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and takes none away.

The new feature will not be useful for all readers; its purpose is to assist people who regularly read at rates other than standard. It can be valuable to students, professionals, and others with a need to cover large amounts of material in a short time. It can also be used by people with some forms of hearing impairment and by anyone who feels more comfortable with a slower rate of reading.

Background

Since 1971, NLS has provided a variable-speed control on the cassette machine for readers who want to adjust the standard rate of reading to conform to their preferred rate. However, changing the playback speed altered the pitch of the narrator's voice, which seemed to drone at lower speeds and sound like Donald Duck at higher speeds.

The pitch-restoration feature of the C-80 model restores the pitch to a normal frequency, but results in significantly distorted sound. To keep the pitch on an even level, minute segments of the original narration must be removed at regular intervals for compressed (faster) speech and elongated at regular intervals for expanded (slower) speech. This sampling technique results in sound that varies considerably from normal speech in terms of frequency and syllable duration.

The amount of speech compression and expansion possible is about the same as on earlier models—from about four-fifths of normal speech to two-and-a-half times normal.

Use

The instruction tape supplied with each C-80 machine describes in detail the specific operation of the pitch-restoration feature. Intelligibility improves with practice and familiarity with the sound quality. The device will be most useful to those who invest several hours of practice.

Readers can achieve better sound by adjusting the tone control to higher levels for faster speeds and to lower levels for slower speeds. Practice at very high speeds can improve intelligibility at more moderate speeds.

Adjustments will vary from cassette to cassette, depending on factors such as the original pitch of the narrator's voice, the type of material being read, and the original reading rate of the narrator.

The addition of the pitch-restoration device to the C-80 machine is to some extent experimental. Reader reaction will determine whether the value justifies the cost for future models.

News is published quarterly by
National Library Service for
the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20542
All correspondence should be addressed
to the attention of Publication and
Media Section

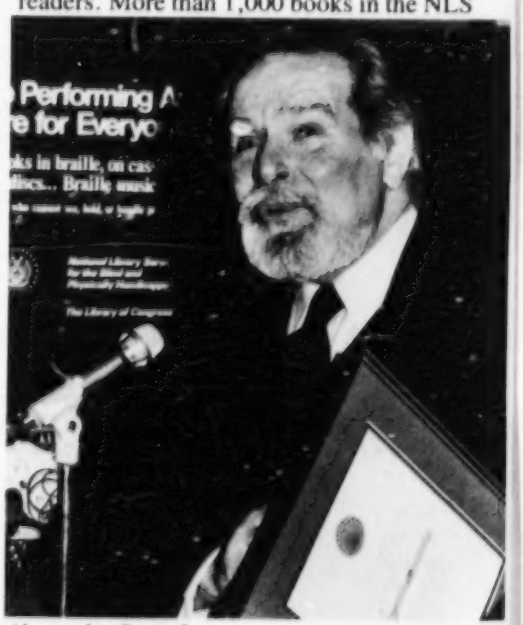
Scourby honored at exhibit opening

"Braille, Bebop, and Bach," an exhibit prepared by NLS to highlight special-format materials on the performing arts, opened in the Performing Arts Library at the John F. Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., on February 23. Alexander Scourby, who has narrated talking books for the NLS program since 1937, was honored at the opening ceremony.

Mr. Scourby was presented an award for artistic excellence by Carol A. Nemeyer, associate librarian for national programs at the Library of Congress. Dr. Nemeyer praised Mr. Scourby's contribution, which has "enriched the minds and lives of those people" who cannot use conventional printed materials. Mr. Scourby, who has narrated more than 400 books during the forty-five years he has been recording, said the reading for the program "has been the most gratifying, and as important a part of my life as anything else."

Mr. Scourby is highly esteemed by NLS patrons, particularly for his narration of the Bible. He is nationally recognized as a leading radio and television narrator and as a performer in Broadway and off-Broadway theater, on radio, on television, and in films.

The NLS demonstration collection at the Kennedy Center provides information about the accessibility of the special-format collection for blind and physically handicapped individuals, just as print materials are accessible to sighted readers. More than 1,000 books in the NLS



Alexander Scourby

collection are devoted to the fine arts, and there are more than 30,000 braille and large-print music scores.

Exhibited materials include recorded books on discs and cassettes, with the special playback machines needed to read them. A selected collection of music scores and books about music is also available for use by blind and physically handicapped individuals at the Performing Arts Library.

A recorded brochure, available as a handout, explains the NLS free library program and gives sample readings from books on the arts.

NLS interacts with 110 nations

A recent records review reflects an active international relationship between NLS and individuals and organizations in 110 countries. Most European nations, the Soviet Union, and many small nations such as the Seychelles Islands have been included in the information exchange.

In some countries communication has been limited to only a few people, while in others there has been contact with a variety of organizations and individuals. In India, for example, there has been correspondence with sixteen of its twenty-two states.

In addition to foreign libraries, NLS communicates with embassies, universities, newspapers, and many citizen groups for blind persons abroad. Talking-book agencies, printing houses, and vocational centers for blind individuals also contribute to the international information flow.

*ureen Young, a long-
patron of the Music
ion, recently visited
. Ms. Young is a lyric
ratura whose future
agements include ap-
rances with several
orchestras and a New
k City recital. She uses
ille almost exclusively
study and preparation.*

NLS/user study completed on cassette braille

A study of cassette-braille machines and their potential usefulness for the NLS program was completed in December 1981, after more than two years of consideration by NLS. Braille readers in five cities also evaluated the machines. The user study was conducted for NLS by VSE Corporation in Alexandria, Virginia.

Findings indicate that the concept is well received by patrons but the technology needs further development before these machines can be used to supplement paper braille for a mass audience.

Cassette braille is a system by which specially designed cassette recorder/players receive and store braille characters on cassette tape and produce braille characters on a display line varying from twenty to forty characters in length. The dots for each braille character are pins raised above the surface by piezoelectric or solenoid drivers. The machines are portable and store braille in a much smaller space than on paper.

The cassette-braille study began in September 1979 with two fundamental concerns:

- that its use would not compromise the quality of braille service, and
- that it would be a cost-effective method of providing braille.

Patrons participating in the study were provided by NLS with an Elinfa Digicassette or a TSI VersaBraille machine. The machines operate on the same principle but differ in specific features such as indexing systems. Evaluation was done through logs kept by patrons recording their experiences with the cassette-braille system, through questionnaires, and through interviews.

The user evaluation addressed three specific areas for consideration:

- user reaction to the concept
- user reaction to specific features of machines studied
- features desirable for NLS machines, should such production become feasible.

Use study results show that 72 percent of users participating believed they would have no significant problems in converting to cassette braille. However, participants requested several engineering changes. Modifications are needed primarily to reduce fatigue and to improve reliability.

Accurate estimates of future costs for an NLS

machine cannot be determined until these changes have been made and tested. Therefore, the study did not show cassette braille to be a cost-effective method of producing braille at this time.

Rhode Island

Locally produced PSAs feature cassette machine

Information for this article was provided by Richard Leduc, Rhode Island regional librarian.

Television viewers in Rhode Island may learn about library services for blind and physically handicapped individuals through public service announcements (PSAs) created specifically for the local audience. Four locally produced TV spots, featuring a regional library patron reading books on cassette, supplement the NLS-produced PSAs.

The local PSAs were developed in response to a 1979 survey that found cassettes the preferred reading medium for more than 70 percent of Rhode Island patrons.

The spots were produced by WPRI-TV in cooperation with the regional library and vary in length from ten to thirty seconds. Regional librarian Richard Leduc wrote the script and the station did the filming at the library.

"We have only one TV station helping with the outreach program, but we've done well with that one," says Mr. Leduc. Prior to production of the local spots, Mr. Leduc appeared on several talk shows aired by WPRI-TV. He also taped a fifteen-minute segment for a radio broadcast and participated in a radio call-in program.

In recognition of exceptional service to libraries, last fall the Rhode Island Library Association presented special-service awards to William Wuerch, president and general manager of WPRI-TV, and to Joseph Fogarty, administrative assistant to the general manager and a member of the regional library's advisory council.

Pictured at special-service awards presentation are William Speck, chairman of the Rhode Island Advisory Council; William Wuerch, president and general manager of WPRI-TV; Joseph Fogerty, administrative assistant to the general manager; and Richard Leduc, regional librarian.

Advisory council

The Rhode Island Advisory Council on Library Services to the Blind and Physically Handicapped has been a support group for the service since the regional library opened in 1968. The council meets quarterly to discuss library activities and to coordinate joint interests.

The fifteen-member body consists of four patrons who read in braille and recorded formats plus representatives of groups and agencies active in promoting library services for special populations. Council members represent public libraries, special-education interests, state services, senior-citizen groups, the Rhode Island radio reading service, volunteer narrators, Telephone Pioneers, and local television and radio stations.

The local PSA effort was launched after planning with the council and largely through the efforts of the media representative.

Services

The Rhode Island regional library provides direct service to approximately 1,600 individuals with braille, recorded, and large-print materials. It also supplies large-print books to public libraries from its collection of about 8,000 books. The service is a function of the Rhode Island Department of State Library Services and is housed in that department's headquarters located near the capitol in Providence.

An Apple II microcomputer, the first in use at a regional library, stores a full file of information on patrons, including name, address, age, handicapping condition, formats used, and a local identification number. The computer is used for retrieving information, compiling statistics, and providing labels for books sent to patrons. Since there is only one terminal, book circulation is done manually by two reader advisors.

All cassette books are inspected upon return by a senior-citizen staff member who works half days. Duplication equipment is available to replace missing cassettes. Inspection is done for disc books only if they are marked with strings to indicate problems.

V lights and camera focus
n a Rhode Island library
atron for local PSA.

Besides regular call-in service, "Tips on Tape," a two- to three-minute recording, is available to patrons in the Providence area. Topics covered are news of the library, meetings of interest, aids and appliances, and new books received. The message is changed twice each week. People outside the Providence area can call the library on a toll-free number.

Other services include a reference collection of approximately 150 books about handicaps and handicapping conditions. Magnifiers are provided for use with the reference collection and as demonstration units.

Cooperating groups

The Rhode Island Department of State Library Services uses a multi-agency approach to volunteer services. Explains Mr. Leduc, "We feel that it's better in a small state to share services with agencies whose needs overlap than to have volunteers working for only one agency."

Taping is done by the Rhode Island Association for the Blind, which also records textbooks provided by individuals and request material for other organizations. Books for the regional library, primarily books on Rhode Island history or by Rhode Island authors, are selected by the library staff and assigned to volunteers for production. The regional library clears copyright, preserves the master, and supplies copies to individuals of volunteer-produced materials.

Machine repairs are done by Telephone Pioneers in their own facility.

A radio reading service started operation in August 1981. It broadcasts a half-hour program each month called "Hear and Now," which covers services and new books at the library.

Network exchange

Colorado. A new cooperative effort of the Colorado regional library and the Denver Center Theatre Company will benefit handicapped theater-goers. The scripts for each of the seven plays of the theatre company's season will be available in braille or recorded form from the library. Also, an informative magazine about each play will be recorded and available at the library.

Florida. The East Regional Branch of the Broward Library System sponsored displays, speakers, and films organized by Joann Block, subregional librarian, as part of its participation in Handicap Awareness Week, October 12–16, 1981. Demonstrations of the Kurzweil Reading Machine and displays by the Telephone Pioneers and other local organizations informed the public about products and services available for disabled persons.

North Carolina. The regional library's newsletter has a new name and a new look. *Tarheel Talk* is printed in an attractive two-column large-print format that uses both upper and lower case letters. The newsletter is also available in braille and on cassette. Its features include monthly book reviews and "TV Tie-Ins," a listing of book titles related to current programs.

The library reports the publication of a new large-type adult book catalog, the first produced by the library since 1976.

North Carolina serves 7,875 individuals with a circulation of 215,756 books and magazines in 1980–1981.

West Virginia. The regional library has announced the appointment of Priscilla N. Laraway as its new chief librarian. Mrs. Laraway received her M.A. in Library Science from the University of Denver in 1973. She has been employed by the West Virginia Library Commission since June 1979. Previously she was head of the reference department at the Altoona Area Library in Altoona, Pennsylvania.

The former librarian, Dolly Rapkin, has been named Head of Institutional Library Services.

In March the West Virginia Library Commission began sponsoring a radio reading program, "Hears to You," for blind persons throughout southern West Virginia. The program is broadcast weekdays from a studio in the regional library with equipment funded from a

contribution by the Junior Department of the West Virginia Foundation of Women's Clubs. It features readings from newspapers, cookbooks, magazines, and bestsellers. About 700 special receiving sets are being distributed free to qualified readers; funding is from contributions and a grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Louisiana. *How to Stop Worrying and Start Living*, by Dale Carnegie, was the book that library patron Lela Billiodeaux described as helping her gain understanding of herself and others and making her a happier person. These comments earned her a ten-dollar prize as the winner of the regional library's "Books Make a Difference" contest. The contest spurred eighty-three entries, of twenty-five words or less, describing a book and the difference it made in the reader's personal life.

The largest group of entrants consisted of those who chose the Bible or parts of it. Five readers mentioned their first talking book after their loss of sight as the most influential.

Missouri. A feature story focusing on the availability and extent of large-print materials appeared in the winter newsletter of the Wolfner Memorial Library in St. Louis. The article listed religious bodies, nonprofit organizations, and selected publishers as primary sources for large-print material.

Most of the large-type books and magazines are available through the regular public library system in Missouri rather than through the regional library. Books which are not available in large print can be photographically enlarged by reproduction services in the state and throughout the country.

New Hampshire. The regional library has adapted the NLS *Manual Circulation Handbook* to fits its routines, using an existing document to provide a comprehensive manual. Each reader advisor has a copy with inserted facing pages describing variations for that library.

Michigan. Julie Nicol, regional librarian, is on a one-year sabbatical to work on her doctorate at Michigan State University. Ms. Nicol is studying in an interdisciplinary humanities program in art, communications, and theater. While on leave, she will still be active as state coordinator of the Very Special Arts Festival.

Margaret Wolfe, former assistant librarian, will take over the duties as regional librarian during this time.

International briefs

Australia. The Royal Tasmanian Society for Blind and Deaf began conversion to the C-77 talking-book system in June 1981. This step puts the Society in line with agencies in other states using the four-track system and enables readers to borrow a wider range of material through interlibrary loans. The new system has the ability to play two-track cassettes, thereby allowing the use of the society's "Hear-a-Book" titles and taped magazines. The current system will be phased out over a two-year period.

The general subscription rate for the National Library of Australia's *National Union Catalogue of Library Materials for the Handicapped* has been set at $15.

The first report of the National Advisory Committee on Library Services for People with Disabilities has been published. The report covers activities of the committee from its formation until June 30, 1981.

Subscriptions for the union catalog and free copies of the advisory committee's report are available by writing: Sales and Subscriptions Unit, National Library of Australia, Canberra ACT 2600, Australia.

Japan. Masaharu Ichihashi has announced the formation of the Japan Association for the Advocacy of the Right to Read for the Visually Handicapped. The organization is an outgrowth of a group founded in 1970 by blind and partially sighted students as the Association for Protection of Visually Handicapped Persons' Lives and Rights. Its purpose is to influence the national government and local governing bodies to provide library services now handled by volunteer groups. Mr. Ichihashi can be contacted for further information at: Japan Association for the Advocacy of the Right to Read for the Visually Handicapped, 179-11 Higashinaganuma, Inagi-shi, Tokyo 206, Japan.

Canada. The National Library of Canada has announced that it will launch a new program designed to help meet the needs of both visually and physically handicapped Canadians. The library will provide information to libraries across the country on special materials being produced. A union catalog will also be established as a registry of titles on braille and on tape. A small advisory committee appointed by the national librarian will advise priorities for

the program and will work with the agencies providing services.

Belgium. Two organizations provide reading material for blind individuals in the Flemish region. The Braille League and Light and Love both started producing braille books in 1920 and by now have provided over 3,700 books that are lent out. There are about 5,500 books recorded on tapes or cassettes by the two organizations, a service begun in the late fifties. Many of the volunteer narrators are from Belgische Radio en Televise.

Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia will soon have the world's first computerized Arabic braille printing operation. Triformation Braille Service has signed a contract to supply the $225,000 worth of sophisticated printing equipment and computers to be installed in a specially designed building in Riyadh.

Computer braille, scheduled to begin in June, is expected to be 1,000 percent faster than handcopied braille.

Great Britain. The 1981 Recognition of Technology Achievement (Rita) Award for computer hardware innovations has gone to Brailtel, a computer terminal that allows blind people access over the telephone lines to data in the Prestel system. The terminal was designed by microcomputer manufacturer Clarke & Smith. Rita Awards are sponsored by *Computer Weekly;* winners are selected by readers' votes.

The Oxfordshire county council's social-services department has begun charging readers for talking-book library service. The formerly free service will now cost £5 a year for pensioners and people receiving supplementary benefits and £10 for others.

The British Computer Association of the Blind (B.C.A.B.), which was formed in 1969 to promote matters of interest to blind people in the computer field, now represents approximately three-quarters of the blind people engaged in data processing in the United Kingdom. B.C.A.B. has developed recognized braille standards for the computer character set, flow-charts, decision tables, structure diagrams, and networks. The association has two seats on the executive council of the Royal National Institute for the Blind to work toward increased services and to make its data-processing expertise available. Membership is open to all visually handicapped people interested in data processing. Information is available from: The Secretary, British Computer Association of the Blind, BCM Box 950, London, WC1V 6XX, England.

Denmark. More than fifty people from five countries—Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden—attended the Nordic Conference of Libraries for the Blind held in Copenhagen, Denmark, in May 1981. Representatives from talking-book libraries, students' libraries, talking-book producers, and other organizations serving blind people discussed ways to improve library service for blind readers.

Topics included computerized talking-book lending, copyright problems, and publishing of catalogs.

Braille book circulation—FY81

Libraries with the largest circulation to individuals are:

		Volumes
1.	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, (includes service to entire state & West Virginia)	26,800
2.	Austin, Texas	15,400
3.	Los Angeles, California (includes service to Arizona)	15,000
4.	Chicago, Illinois	14,700
5.	Watertown, Massachusetts (includes service to Maine, Vermont, and New Hampshire)	13,300
6.	Cleveland, Ohio	12,900
7.	Des Moines, Iowa	12,400
8.	Atlanta, Georgia	12,200
9.	Lansing, Michigan (includes service to entire state)	11,900
10.	Salt Lake City, Utah (includes service to ten other western states)	11,700

Statistics compiled for the 1981 fiscal year (from Oct. 1, 1980 to Sept. 30, 1981) show a total circulation of 304,100 braille volumes. These figures do not include direct-circulation magazines. The largest number by far went to individuals (268,900), followed by interlibrary loan (25,200), and deposit collections (10,000).

Planning Barrier Free Libraries: A Seminar

July 9, 1982
1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.

Holiday Inn—Independence Mall
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, Library of Congress, in cooperation with the School of Library and Information Science, The Catholic University of America, will sponsor a seminar on building or renovating barrier free libraries. Registration fee: $25.00. Topics will include:

- **Preplanning Process**
- **Site Selection**
- **Barrier Free Design Concepts**
- **Renovation Techniques**
- **Contracting Procedures**
- **Equipment and Furnishing Selection**
- **Project Supervision**
- **Post-Construction Activities**

Seminar leader: Charles A. Moss, Moss, Garikes and Associates, Architects, Inc., Birmingham, Alabama; member, American Institute of Architects; author, *Planning Barrier Free Libraries*; designer, Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, a model for barrier free libraries of this type.

Seminar on Planning Barrier Free Libraries

July 9, 1982 Holiday Inn—Independence Mall Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Complete this registration form and mail to:
School of Library and Information Science
The Catholic University of America
Washington, DC 20064
Attn: Barrier Free Seminar

I will attend the seminar on planning barrier free libraries, July 9, 1982, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Name _____
Address _____
_____
Position _____

Enclosed is my registration fee of $25.00. Make checks payable to: The Catholic University of America

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